

Message Text

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S E C R E T JERUSALEM 0983

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PBOR, PEPR, MARR, UNSC, IS, LE, XF
SUBJECT: SIILASVUO'S APRIL 4 MEETING WITH BOUTROS AND KHOURY

SUMMARY: KHOURY AND HAJJ ASSIGNING LEBANESE GENDARMERIE
IMMEDIATELY TO ASSIST UNIFIL IN TYRE AND MARJAYOUN.
GRADUALLY THEIR PRESENCE WILL BE EXTENDED IN SOUTH
LEBANON. TWO OR THREE COMPANIES OF LEBANESE ARMY WILL BE
SENT TO EASTERN AND CENTRAL SECTORS WHEN IDF WITHDRAWAL
BEGINS. BOUTROS DEFINED GOL POSITION ON UNIFIL MANDATE.
UNIFIL HEADQUARTERS WILL BE SET UP NEAR SIDON WITHIN
NEXT FEW DAYS. END SUMMARY

1. SIILASVUO AND PRIETO FIRST MET KHOURY AND COL HAJJ
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(CHIEF OF INTERNAL SECURITY FORCES). FORMER STRESSED
MOST PRESSING NEED WAS FOR SOME LEBANESE GENDARMES TO
ASSIST UNIFIL AT ONCE AT CHECK POINTS IN ORDER TO HELP
CONDUCT BODY-SEARCHES. COL. HAJJ AGREED TO INSTRUCT
LOCAL COMMANDER ASSAD DAHER TO MAKE AVAILABLE SOME 50
GENDARMES NOW IN THE TYRE AREA AS OF APRIL 5. INITIALLY,
THEY WOULD WORK WITH UNIFIL IN TYRE AND MARJAYOUN.

GRADUALLY, ADDITIONAL GENDARMES WOULD BE "INFILTRATED" THROUGHOUT SOUTHERN LEBANON.

2. IN SUBSEQUENT MEETING WITH BOUTROS AND KHOURY, SIILASVUO BRIEFED ON PRESENT DEPLOYMENT OF UNIFIL AND REINFORCEMENTS EN ROUTE. SAID HE MUST HAVE LEBANESE ARMY UNITS TO WORK WITH UNIFIL AT EARLIEST POSSIBLE TIME. HE ALSO SAID GOI HAD AGREED TO START WITHDRAWAL IN EASTERN AND CENTRAL SECTORS BUT AT THE MOMENT HE COULD NOT GIVE FIRM DATE OR PRECISE EXTENT OF PULLBACK.

3. KHOURY DISPLAYED GREAT CONCERN FOR SECURITY OF LEBANESE ARMY SAYING HE FEARED ATTACKS BY IDF AND PLO. SIILASVUO GAVE FIRM ASSURANCES GOI WANTED LEBANESE ARMY IN SOUTH AND PALESTINIANS HAD BEEN EXPELLED EXCEPT FOR TYRE. IN EVENT PALESTINIANS LATER ATTEMPTED MASSIVE INFILTRATION, LEBANESE ARMY WOULD PROVIDE ITS OWN SECURITY. KHOURY WANTED TO KNOW HOW HIS FORCES COULD MOVE SAFELY INTO SOUTH LEBANON. FINALLY, IT WAS AGREED UNIFIL WOULD ACCOMPANY AS LONG AS TERM "ESCORT" NOT USED. KHOURY THEN COMMITTED HIMSELF TO ASSIGN TWO OR THREE COMPANIES AT THE TIME IDF WITHDRAWAL BEGINS IN EASTERN AND CENTRAL AREAS. HE WILL ALSO TRY TO SEND SMALL GROUPS (PLATOON SIZE) DOWN COAST ROAD TO TYRE. KHOURY REMARKED THERE WERE SOME IN GOL WHO WOULD NOT AGREE, BUT HE WAS WILLING TO TAKE RISK. BOUTROS AND KHOURY SAID SOME ADDITIONAL
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CONTINGENTS MIGHT BE LANDED AT RIYaq AIR BASE IN BEKAA VALLEY AND THEN MOVED SOUTH THROUGH SYRIAN ADF COUNTRY TO HASBAYYA. SIILASVUO THOUGHT THIS MADE SENSE.

4. SIILASVUO MENTIONED ARRIVAL OF LEBANESE LIAISON OFFICER AT MARJAYOUN AND FACT THAT SOUTHERN LEBANESE RESIDENTS, MOSLEM AND CHRISTIAN, HAD CALLED TO PAY RESPECTS.

5. GOL AGREES UNIFIL HQ WILL BE AT AZ ZAHRANI EIGHT KILOMETERS SOUTH OF SIDON. UNIFIL USE OF COSTAL ROAD BETWEEN BEIRUT, AZ ZAHRANI AND TYRE (WHICH WILL BE LOGISTIC BASE) SHOULD HELP NORMALIZE SITUATION OVER TIME.

6. BOUTROS SAID GOL DID NOT AGREE UNIFIL MANDATE WAS LIMITED TO TAKING OVER AREA VACATED BY IDF. AREA OF OPERATION WAS TO BE DEFINED IN CONSULTATION BETWEEN GOL AND UN AND COULD INCLUDE TERRITORY NORTH OF LITANI SUCH AS NABATIYAH. HE RECOGNIZED UNIFIL DID NOT HAVE STRENGTH AT PRESENT TO CROSS LITANI BUT HE WANTED GOL POSITION TO BE CLEAR. SIILASVUO DID NOT DEMUR.

7. SIILASVUO SAID HE HAD THOUGHT OF GOING BACK TO DAMASCUS BUT HAD CONCLUDED IT UNWISE TO GO AHEAD UNTIL HE HAD SOMETHING DEFINITE IN THE WAY OF IDF WITHDRAWAL PLANS. BOUTROS AGREED FULLY COMMENTING OTHERWISE SYRIANS WOULD ONLY BE ANGERED.

8. SIILASVUO SAYS UNIFIL HQ AT AZ ZAHRANI COULD BE OPERATIONAL WITHIN NEXT FEW DAYS. HE AND ERSKINE WILL MEET WITH UNIT COMMANDERS AT NAQOURA APRIL 6 TO DISCUSS JOINT OPERATIONS WITH GENDARMES AS WELL AS OTHER MATTERS.

9. SIILASVUO REGRETTED HIS SCHEDULE AS SET BY LEBANESE DID NOT PERMIT A CALL ON AMBASSADOR PARKER. ON NEXT VISIT HE WILL TRY TO STAY OVER NIGHT AND THIS WILL GIVE HIM
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ENOUGH TIME.

10. COMMENT: THIS ONE-TWO OPERATION SHOWS SOME SIGNS OF YIELDING RESULT. WILL BE INTERESTED TO HEAR BEIRUT ECHOES FROM ABOVE MEETINGS. EVEN MORE INTERESTING WILL BE EVIDENCE PROMISED ACTIONS ARE OR WILL BE TAKEN. SIILASVUO SHARES OUR FAVORABLE OPINION OF BOUTROS AND IS WELL AWARE OF TREMENDOUS PROBLEMS HE FACES IN PRODUCING ACTION FROM GOL.
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TAGS: PGOV, PBOR, PEPR, MARR, IS, LE, XF, UNSC, (SIILASVUO, ENSIO), (BOUTROS, FOUAD), (KHOURY, VICTOR)
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